

WE CLAIM:

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1. A computer program product for detecting an outbreak of a computer virus on a computer apparatus, said computer program product comprising:
- 10 (i) measurement computer code operable to measure one or more measurement parameters indicative of non virus specific activity of said computer apparatus over a respective measurement period;
- (ii) comparison computer code operable to compare said one or more measurement parameters with respective predetermined threshold levels; and
- 15 (iii) signal generating computer code operable to generate a signal indicative of an outbreak of a computer virus if one or more of said one or more measurement parameters crosses a respective predetermined threshold level.
2. A computer program product as claimed in claim 1, wherein one of said measurement parameters is how many e-mail messages are sent having an identical message title.
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3. A computer program product as claimed in claim 1, wherein one of said measurement parameters is how many e-mail messages are sent having an identical file attachment.
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4. A computer program product as claimed in claim 1, wherein one of said measurement parameters is how many e-mail messages are sent having a file attachment of a given file type.
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5. A computer program product as claimed in claim 4, wherein said given file type is an executable file type.

5 6. A computer program product as claimed in claim 1, wherein one of said measurement parameters is e-mail throughput within said computer system.

7. A computer program product as claimed in claim 6, wherein each e-mail processed has an associated size value and e-mail throughput is measured in a form
10 dependent upon a number of e-mails multiplied by a total of size values for said e-mails.

8. A computer program product as claimed in claim 1, wherein said respective predetermined threshold levels are varied in dependence upon time of day.
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9. A computer program product as claimed in claim 1, wherein said respective predetermined threshold levels are varied in dependence upon day of week.

10. A computer program product as claimed in claim 1, wherein said one or more
20 measurement parameters are user selectable.

11. A computer program product as claimed in claim 1, wherein said respective measurements periods are user selectable.

25 12. A computer program product as claimed in claim 1, wherein said respective predetermined threshold levels are user selectable.

13. A method of detecting an outbreak of a computer virus on a computer apparatus, said method comprising the steps of:

30 (i) measuring one or more measurement parameters indicative of non virus specific activity of said computer apparatus over a respective measurement period;

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(ii) comparing said one or more measurement parameters with respective predetermined threshold levels; and

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(iii) generating a signal indicative of an outbreak of a computer virus if one or more of said one or more measurement parameters crosses a respective predetermined threshold level.

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14. A method as claimed in claim 13, wherein one of said measurement parameters is how many e-mail messages are sent having an identical message title.

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15. A method as claimed in claim 13, wherein one of said measurement parameters is how many e-mail messages are sent having an identical file attachment.

16. A method as claimed in claim 13, wherein one of said measurement parameters is how many e-mail messages are sent having a file attachment of a given file type.

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17. A method as claimed in claim 16, wherein said given file type is an executable file type.

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18. A method as claimed in claim 13, wherein one of said measurement parameters is e-mail throughput within said computer system.

19. A method as claimed in claim 18, wherein each e-mail processed has an associated size value and e-mail throughput is measured in a form dependent upon a number of e-mails multiplied by a total of size values for said e-mails.

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20. A method as claimed in claim 13, wherein said respective predetermined threshold levels are varied in dependence upon time of day.

5 21. A method as claimed in claim 13, wherein said respective predetermined threshold levels are varied in dependence upon day of week.

22. A method as claimed in claim 13, wherein said one or more measurement parameters are user selectable.

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23. A method as claimed in claim 13, wherein said respective measurements periods are user selectable.

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24. A method as claimed in claim 13, wherein said respective predetermined threshold levels are user selectable.

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25. Apparatus for detecting an outbreak of a computer virus on a computer apparatus, said apparatus comprising:

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- (i) measuring logic operable to measure one or more measurement parameters indicative of non virus specific activity of said computer apparatus over a respective measurement period;
- (ii) comparing logic operable to compare said one or more measurement parameters with respective predetermined threshold levels; and
- (iii) signal generating logic operable to generate a signal indicative of an outbreak of a computer virus if one or more of said one or more measurement parameters crosses a respective predetermined threshold level.

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26. Apparatus as claimed in claim 25, wherein one of said measurement parameters is how many e-mail messages are sent having an identical message title.

27. Apparatus as claimed in claim 25, wherein one of said measurement parameters is how many e-mail messages are sent having an identical file attachment.

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28. Apparatus as claimed in claim 25, wherein one of said measurement parameters is how many e-mail messages are sent having a file attachment of a given file type.

10 29. Apparatus as claimed in claim 28, wherein said given file type is an executable file type.

30. Apparatus as claimed in claim 25, wherein one of said measurement parameters is e-mail throughput within said computer system.

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31. Apparatus as claimed in claim 30, wherein each e-mail processed has an associated size value and e-mail throughput is measured in a form dependent upon a number of e-mails multiplied by a total of size values for said e-mails.

20 32. Apparatus as claimed in claim 25, wherein said respective predetermined threshold levels are varied in dependence upon time of day.

33. Apparatus as claimed in claim 25, wherein said respective predetermined threshold levels are varied in dependence upon day of week.

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34. Apparatus as claimed in claim 25, wherein said one or more measurement parameters are user selectable.

30 35. Apparatus as claimed in claim 25, wherein said respective measurements periods are user selectable.

36. Apparatus as claimed in claim 25, wherein said respective predetermined threshold levels are user selectable.